

INFORMATION FOR SELF-REPRESENTED (PRO SE) PARTIES


SMALL CLAIMS COURT IN FLORIDA


DESIGNED TO RESOLVE DISPUTES INVOLVING AMOUNTS OF \$8,000 OR LESS

Why Use Small Claims Court?

It's designed to be:  **Simpler** –straightforward and easy to follow

 **Faster** – quicker resolution than traditional court

 **Less Formal Legal Rules**– more accessible for non-lawyers

 **Governed By:** Florida Small Claims Rules, Rules 7.010 through 7.350, which provide guidelines to keep the process fair and efficient.

Who Can File? Any individual of legal age, business, or corporation can file a small claims case.

Before Filing a Lawsuit: Ask Yourself These Questions

- Have I tried all possible and/or reasonable means to reach a settlement with the other party?
- Do I have, or am I able to obtain, the necessary evidence to prove my case?
- Do I know the correct legal name and address of the defendant?
- If I win, will I be able to collect the judgment?

Did You Know?


There's an alternative to filing a lawsuit in court.

The **Citizen Dispute Settlement Program** offers a free way to resolve disputes—without going to trial.

Important: Both parties must agree to participate voluntarily.

For more details, visit:  [Citizen Dispute Settlement Program](#)

Small Claims Court:

 **Step 1: Start the process** *by filing a Statement of Claim:*

Tell the court what happened, who's involved, and how much money you're asking for.

 **Step 2: To speed things along you'll need to include:**

- The correct legal name and address of the person or business you're suing
- Provide a short, clear description of what happened
- Provide documents relevant to your suit, such as contracts, invoices, bills, and/or receipts. Include one copy for the court file and one copy per defendant. The original documents should be presented at the hearing.

 **Step 3: File your case with the Clerk of Court (filing fees apply):**

- File in the county where the defendant lives or where the dispute occurred.

[Click here to learn how to file a small claims case.](#)

[Click here to complete the required forms: Statement of Claim and Designation of Email Address.](#)

 **Step 4: Have your Statement of Claim and Pretrial Conference Notice served on the other party:**

This is a requirement. Service can be completed by the *Sheriff Department* [Click here to view the civil process service information and fee schedule](#) or the *Special Process Server* [Click here to view the list of appointed Special Process Servers](#) or by paying the *Clerk of Court to send it by certified mail* (this option is only available if the address is in Florida)

This information is not intended as legal advice-it is provided solely as a public resource for educational purposes. For legal advice or assistance specific to your Small Claim court situation, it is strongly recommended that you consult an attorney.